What is SARE?

Since 1988, the Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) program has been the go-to USDA grants and outreach program for farmers, ranchers, researchers and educators who want to develop innovations that improve farm profitability, protect water and land, and revitalize communities. To date, SARE has awarded over $404 million to more than 8,776 initiatives.

SARE is grassroots with far-reaching impact

Four regional councils of expert practitioners set priorities and make grants in every state and island protectorate.

SARE communicates results

SARE shares project results by requiring grantees to conduct outreach and grower engagement; and by maintaining an online library of practical publications, grantee-produced information products and other educational materials.

SARE in South Carolina

southern.sare.org/state-profiles/south-carolina/

$5,830,731 in total funding

93 grant projects

(since 1988)

For a complete list of grant projects state by state, go to www.sare.org/state-summaries

Project Highlight: Fruit Bagging Reduce Reliances on Pesticides

When Clemson University fruit specialist Juan Carlos Melgar suggested putting a paper bag over a peach to detract insects and diseases during production, farmers laughed. But when his SARE-funded trials showed that the technique protects the fruit from devastating brown rot, marauding insects like plum curculio and even hungry birds, producers and backyard growers started paying attention.

Researchers found that bagging peaches between petal fall and harvest reduces pesticide use while increasing yields and maintaining flavor. Even though it involves more labor, Melgar estimated that bagging can increase revenue by $95 per tree in an organic system when the fruit is sold directly to consumers. “We’ve gotten a lot of positive responses from farmers all over the country as a result of the research study,” said Melgar.

Fruit bagging for protection is a common strategy in Asia. With South Carolina ranked second in the nation behind California in peach production at 77,000 tons, researchers at Clemson felt that applying the technique to orchards was a worthwhile endeavor because peach growers in the southeastern U.S. face very high pest and disease pressures. Melgar is taking this research to a regional level with a newly acquired $1 million USDA-NIFA grant, applying the technique to more orchards in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

For more information on this project, see sare.org/projects, and search for project number OS16-094.
SARE in South Carolina

Grants awarded
2019–2024

Total awards: **25 grants**
- 4 Farmer/Rancher
- 9 Research and Education
- 4 Professional Development Program
- 1 On Farm Research/Partnership
- 4 Graduate Student
- 3 Education Only

Total funding: **$3,598,225**
- $55,435 Farmer/Rancher
- $3,019,263 Research and Education
- $310,644 Professional Development Program
- $20,000 On Farm Research/Partnership
- $57,383 Graduate Student
- $135,500 Education Only

Find a complete list of projects on page 3.

Farmer and rancher impacts
2019–2024

SARE grantees have reported the following impacts from their projects:

- **1,161 farmers participated in a SARE-funded project**
- **157 farmers reported a change in knowledge, awareness, skills or attitude**
- **27 farmers changed a practice**

Learn about local impacts at:
southern.sare.org/sare-in-your-state/south-carolina/

Contact Your SARE State Coordinator

SARE sustainable ag coordinators run state-level educational programs for Extension and other ag professionals, and many help grant applicants and recipients with planning and outreach. Visit southern.sare.org/state-profiles/south-carolina/ to learn more.

John Andrae  
Clemson University  
(864) 656-4080  
jandrae@clemson.edu

Joshua Idassi  
South Carolina State University  
(803) 878-9038  
jidassi@scsu.edu

Jonathan Windham  
Clemson University  
(843) 519-0487  
jwindha@clemson.edu

SARE is funded by the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

This report includes summaries of competitive grant programs only. Some competitive grant programs that are no longer offered may be included or excluded from the totals in this report depending on the grant program and SARE region.
South Carolina has been awarded $5,520,400 grants to support 79 projects, including but not limited to, 16 research and/or education projects, 13 professional development projects and 21 producer-led projects. South Carolina has also received additional SARE support through multi-state projects.

### RESEARCH AND EDUCATION GRANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project #</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>SARE Support</th>
<th>Project Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| LS24-395   | Empirical assessment of grain sorghum resiliency, productivity, and profitability in the southeastern USA | $399,974     | Dr. Richard Boyles, III  
Dr. Zachary Brenton  
Dr. Joseph Roberts  
Dr. Joseph Roberts  
Anastasia Thayer |
|            |                                                                              |              | Clemson University  
Carolina Seed Systems  
Clemson University  
Clemson University  
Clemson University |
| LS23-379   | Flipping the cages on sustainable aquaculture: a study on oyster aquaculture technique and policy to reduce pathogens | $358,557     | Sarah Pedigo  
Matthew Gorstein  
Dr. Peter Kingsley-Smith  
Mike Marshall  
Dr. Matthew Nowlin  
Dr. Matthew Nowlin |
|            |                                                                              |              | South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium  
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium  
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Marine Resources  
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control  
College of Charleston |
| LS22-366   | Development of Sustainable Strategies for Managing Bacterial Diseases and Improving Tree Health in the Peach Production System | $371,000     | Hehe Wang  
Juan Carlos Melgar  
Guido Schnabel  
Dr. Michael Vassalos  
Dr. Rongzhong Ye |
|            |                                                                              |              | Clemson University  
Clemson University  
Clemson University  
Clemson University  
Clemson University |
Establishing an Organic Watermelon Industry in South Carolina
Matthew Cutulle
Clemson University, CREC
Dr.Bhupinder Farmaha
Clemson University
Dr.Shaker Kousik
USDA-ARS- United States Vegetable Lab
Dr.Amnon Levi
USDA-ARS-United States Vegetable Lab
Brian Ward

Cover crop inter-seeding in organic corn production to reduce resource inputs and soil disturbance and enhance pest control and farm profitability
Dr.Sruthi Narayanan
Clemson University
Dr.Carmen Blubaugh
University of Illinois
Dr.Joshua Idassi
South Carolina State University
Dr.Dave Lamie
Clemson University
Dr.Meghnaa Tallapragada
Temple University
Dr.Rongzhong Ye
Clemson University

Gullah/Geechee Agro-Culture: Sustaining Culture to Sustain Agriculture in the Lowcountry
Dr.Najmah Thomas
University of South Carolina Beaufort

Strengthening Farmer-consumer Connections for Sustainable Agricultural Systems
Courtney Quinn
Furman University
Dr.Karen Allen
Furman University
Dr.John Quinn
Furman University

Utility of Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation and Organic Herbicides for Weed and Disease Management in Organic Solanaceous Vegetable Systems
Matthew Cutulle
Clemson University, CREC

Incorporating Natural, Non-toxic Arthropod Resistant Tomato Varieties into Southern Production Systems
Juang-Horng Chong
Clemson University

Improving Silvopasture Systems in the South: Identification of Suitable Forage Crops and Enhancement of Environmental Quality in Upland Forests
Dr.John Quinn
Furman University
### Improvement of the safety of food handling practices on small farms

**Project #**: LS09-217  
**Project Title**: Improvement of the safety of food handling practices on small farms  
**SARE Support**: $200,000  
**Project Leaders**: Dr. Paul Dawson, Clemson University

### Expanding the grazing season for sustainable year-round forage-finished beef production

**Project #**: LS06-188  
**Project Title**: Expanding the grazing season for sustainable year-round forage-finished beef production  
**SARE Support**: $163,000  
**Project Leaders**: Susan Duckett, Clemson University

### Development and Integration of Sustainable Agriculture Core Curriculum Training into the Southern Region Extension Education System

**Project #**: LS04-213  
**Project Title**: Development and Integration of Sustainable Agriculture Core Curriculum Training into the Southern Region Extension Education System  
**SARE Support**: $241,000  
**Project Leaders**: Dr. Geoff Zehnder, Clemson University

### Suppression of weeds and other pests in fresh market vegetables using wild radish cover crop

**Project #**: LS03-157  
**Project Title**: Suppression of weeds and other pests in fresh market vegetables using wild radish cover crop  
**SARE Support**: $173,125  
**Project Leaders**: Jason Norsworthy, Clemson University

### Creating a value chain system for local and regional farm products

**Project #**: LS03-155  
**Project Title**: Creating a value chain system for local and regional farm products  
**SARE Support**: $19,310  
**Project Leaders**: Dr. Geoff Zehnder, Clemson University

### Evaluation of Low-Input, No-Till, No-Herbicide Continuous Grazing System for Dairy Cows

**Project #**: LS93-054  
**Project Title**: Evaluation of Low-Input, No-Till, No-Herbicide Continuous Grazing System for Dairy Cows  
**SARE Support**: $118,911  
**Project Leaders**: Jean Bertrand, Clemson University

### Professional Development Program Grants

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPDP23-021</td>
<td>Indigo and Companion Food Crops: Opportunities for Limited Resource Farmers in the Lowcountry of South Carolina and Georgia</td>
<td>$79,500</td>
<td>Donna Hardy, ICIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPDP22-15</td>
<td>Training Educators in the Southern Region Using Aquaponics as a Sustainable Agriculture Solution</td>
<td>$71,322</td>
<td>Dr. Lance Beecher, Clemson University, Ben Calhoun, Greenwood Area SBDC, Roland McReynolds, Carolina Farm Stewardship Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Code</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>PI(s)</td>
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</table>
| SPDP21-01    | Train the Trainers: Reducing impacts from harmful algal blooms in livestock water sources in South Carolina | $79,975 | Dr. Debabrata Sahoo  
Clemson University  
Dr. Matthew Burns  
Clemson University  
Mark Nettles  
South Carolina State University,  
1890 Research and Extension  
Heather Nix  
Clemson University Cooperative Extension  
Dr. Michael Vassalos  
Clemson University  
Sarah White  
Clemson University |
| ES19-150     | Advanced Soil Health Training for South Carolina Agriculture Professionals    | $79,847 | Kelly Flynn  
Clemson University |
| ES17-137     | Wholesale Success: Building the capacity of farmers to meet demand for locally and sustainably grown produce | $78,008 | Dr. Geoff Zehnder  
Clemson University |
| ES13-117     | Training in Renewable Energy Systems for Small Farms to Reduce Energy Costs and Improve Profitability | $78,128 | Dr. Geoff Zehnder  
Clemson University |
| ES11-108     | Pollinator Conservation Short Course                                           | $92,066 | Eric Mader  
The Xerces Society |
| ES10-106     | On-Farm Training in Organic Pest Management Practices for Small, Diversified Farms | $83,775 | Dr. Geoff Zehnder  
Clemson University |
| ES02-064     | Calhoun Fields Laboratory: A Program for Experiential Training in Organic Farming Systems | $49,926 | Dr. Geoff Zehnder  
Clemson University |
| ES01-057     | South Carolina Farm and Forest Land Conservation Training                       | $25,428 | Ben Boozer  
Clemson Institute for Economic & Community Develop |
| ES97-018     | The First Requirement of Agriculture Sustainability: Efficient Management of Available Resources | $60,000 | Charles Q. Artis  
South Carolina State University, Community and Economic Development |
| ES97-017     | Overcoming Training Obstacles: A Realistic Cost-Effective Approach             | $10,000 | Charles Q. Artis  
South Carolina State University, Community and Economic Development |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project #</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>SARE Support</th>
<th>Project Leaders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LST94-006</td>
<td>Extending Sustainable Agriculture Concepts and Practices to Traditional Agricultural Advisors</td>
<td>$11,700</td>
<td>Jim Palmer</td>
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<td>Clemson</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS23-350</td>
<td>The Effectiveness in Attracting Oyster Spat on PVC versus Bamboo Stakes for Reef Restoration in the North Edisto River</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>Alison Pierce</td>
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<td>Barrier Island Oyster Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS22-341</td>
<td>Does reduction of nitrate inputs in pasture land treated with Chlorella vulgaris result in cost savings and healthier soil and grass?</td>
<td>$10,975</td>
<td>Dale Snyder</td>
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<td>Sweetgrass Garden Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS21-330</td>
<td>Does Treatment with Chlorella vulgaris Extend the Life of Tomato Plants to Increase Tomato Sales?</td>
<td>$14,640</td>
<td>Dale Snyder</td>
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<td>Sweetgrass Garden Co-op</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS20-326</td>
<td>Summer Cover Crops for Organic No-till Broccoli</td>
<td>$14,820</td>
<td>Sarah Belk</td>
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<td>Wild Hope Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS18-309</td>
<td>Studying the Use of Copper to Raise Healthier Goats</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Judy Langley</td>
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<td>Judy Langley</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS17-300</td>
<td>Scaling Indigo Production in South Carolina</td>
<td>$5,965</td>
<td>Kathy McCullough</td>
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<td>FS16-288</td>
<td>Modified Method for Roller-Crimper No Till System in the Southeast Coastal Plain</td>
<td>$8,327</td>
<td>Mary Connor</td>
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<td>Three Sisters Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS14-284</td>
<td>Is freshwater fish compost as effective as saltwater fish compost on vegetable production?</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Dale Snyder</td>
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<td>FS13-276</td>
<td>Shade cloth for fall bearing blackberry druplet abortion/malfunction problems in southeastern USA</td>
<td>$6,458</td>
<td>Walker Miller</td>
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<td>The Happy Berry Bunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS11-255</td>
<td>Cucumber Pollination with Bumblebees</td>
<td>$8,530</td>
<td>David MacFawn</td>
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<td>Rawl Farms</td>
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<td>FS11-257</td>
<td>Is Fish Waste Compost worth the Mess and Effort?</td>
<td>$9,848</td>
<td>Dale Snyder</td>
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<td>Sweetgrass Garden Co-op</td>
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<td>Project #</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
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<td>Project Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS10-245</td>
<td>Forage Chicory Use in Rotational Grazing of Sheep to Reduce Intestinal Worms, Reduce Grain Supplementation, And Maximize Growth</td>
<td>$9,078</td>
<td>Kathy McCaskill Old McCaskill's Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS10-247</td>
<td>Using Buckwheat to Attract Beneficial Insects for Crop Protection</td>
<td>$9,037</td>
<td>Daniel Parson Parson Produce</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS09-233</td>
<td>Dual Season Organic Asparagus Production</td>
<td>$9,995</td>
<td>Mary Connor Three Sisters Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS04-184</td>
<td>Edamame Variety Trials for the Local Fresh Market</td>
<td>$4,777</td>
<td>Carolyn A. Prince</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS99-102</td>
<td>Cattle Lane Construction Alternatives That Enhance Intensive Grazing Systems</td>
<td>$9,850</td>
<td>Tom Trantham Trantham's Dairy Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS98-070</td>
<td>Red Plastic Mulch as an Alternative to Insecticides in Production of Seedless Watermelons</td>
<td>$7,390</td>
<td>John Frazier</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS98-079</td>
<td>Demonstration of a Low-Input Diversified Small Farm Operation</td>
<td>$9,200</td>
<td>Theodore Nesmith</td>
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<td>FS95-033</td>
<td>Cover Crops in Integrated Vegetable Production Systems</td>
<td>$9,285</td>
<td>Charles Wingard W.P. Rawl &amp; Sons Farms</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS94-016</td>
<td>Clover Cover Crops, Weed Management and Consumer Tolerance to Insect Damage</td>
<td>$4,710</td>
<td>Horace &amp; Shaw Skipper The Berry Patch</td>
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<tr>
<td>FS94-005</td>
<td>Vegetable Marketing Strategies for a Small Farm Co-op</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Curtis Inabinett Sea Island Farmers Co-op</td>
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**GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS**

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<th>Project Title</th>
<th>SARE Support</th>
<th>Project Leaders</th>
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<tr>
<td>GS23-283</td>
<td>Potential of Cover Crop Influence on Water Repellency and the Sustainability of Southern U.S. Soils</td>
<td>$12,042</td>
<td>Dr.Dara Park Clemson University Payton Davis Clemson University</td>
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<td>GS23-274</td>
<td>Enhancing the Biological Control of the Diamondback Moth (Plutella xylostella) Through Habitat Management for Sustainable Brassica Production</td>
<td>$12,341</td>
<td>Dr.Tom Bilbo Clemson University Amna Ghani Clemson university</td>
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<td>Project #</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS22-263</td>
<td>Development and Phenotypic Evaluation of a Brassica oleracea Leafy Greens Diversity Panel</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
<td>Dr.Sandra Branham Clemson University</td>
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<td>Khushwinder Kaur Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS22-259</td>
<td>PRECISION: leveraging deeP REinforCement learning algorithm for Sustainable IrrigatiON scheduling</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
<td>Dr.Vidya Samadi Clemson University</td>
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<td>Lisa Umutoni Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS18-192</td>
<td>Cover Cropping to Improve Soil Moisture Content for the Following Cash Crop</td>
<td>$16,496</td>
<td>Dr.Sruthi Narayanan Clemson University</td>
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<td>Dr.Ricardo St. Aime Clemson University</td>
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<td>GS17-174</td>
<td>Optimizing Nutritional Management in Fruit Tree Production in Southern U.S.</td>
<td>$16,441</td>
<td>Juan Carlos Melgar Clemson University</td>
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<td>Qi Zhou Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS13-126</td>
<td>Weeds, Nitrogen, and Yield: Measuring the Effectiveness of an Organic No-Till System</td>
<td>$10,927</td>
<td>Dr.Geoff Zehnder Clemson University</td>
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<td>David Robb Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS04-034</td>
<td>Control of Soilborne Fungi with Biofumigation</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Anthony Keinath Clemson University</td>
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<td>Samuel Njoroge Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS04-041</td>
<td>Preliminary Investigation for Application of Supercritical Fluid Extraction Technology for Garlic Oil Extraction</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Dr.Terry Walker Clemson University</td>
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<td>Meidui Dong Clemson University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS03-020</td>
<td>The Assessment of Conservation and Traditional Tillage Systems on Weed Dynamics, Insect Abundance, and Northern Bobwhite Quail Life and Behavioral Patterns</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>William Bowerman Clemson University</td>
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<td>Derek Eggert Clemson University</td>
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<td>OS20-133</td>
<td>The Potential of Inter-seeded Cover Crops for Enhancing Soil Health and Soil Moisture Content in a Row Crop Production System</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Dr.Sruthi Narayanan Clemson University</td>
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<td>OS18-118</td>
<td>Cover Cropping to Increase the Sustainability of Cropping Systems by Developing Soil Organic Matter, Improving Soil Health, and Suppressing Weed Growth</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>Dr.Sruthi Narayanan Clemson University</td>
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<td>OS17-109</td>
<td>Identification of Factors Involved in Peach Skin Streaking</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>Guido Schnabel Clemson University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OS16-100  Getting to the Bottom of ‘Bronzing’, A Peach Skin Disorder Causing Severe Losses for Organic and Conventional Peach Growers  $15,000  Guido Schnabel  Clemson University

OS16-096  Cover Crop Influence on Stored Soil Water Availability to Subsequent Crops  $14,995  Dr.Sruthi Narayanan  Clemson University

OS16-094  Fruit Bagging as a Strategy to Reduce Reliance on Pesticides for the Production of Peaches in the Southeast  $14,967  Juan Carlos Melgar  Clemson University

OS16-093  Increasing Sustainability of Peanut, Cotton, and Soybean Production Systems Through Innovative Interseeding Technology to Enhance Farm Profit and Reduce Pest Occurrence  $14,990  Daniel Anco  Clemson University

OS07-035  On-Farm Use of a Hybrid Vetch Cover Crop to Reduce Fusarium Wilt in Seedless Watermelon  $9,900  Anthony Keinath  Clemson University

OS03-010  Poultry Litter Research Project  $12,600  David Gunter  Clemson Extension Service

OS03-013  Growing Organic Fruits and Vegetables for Local Farmer’s Markets  $9,925  York Glover

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANTS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS12-087</td>
<td>Fighting Obesity in Schools By Changing Eating Habits of Students</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Robert Behr  Ashley Ridge High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS10-078</td>
<td>GrowFood Carolina</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Lisa Turansky  South Carolina Coastal Conservation League</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS08-065</td>
<td>Marshview Community Organic Farms – Young Farmers of the Lowcountry</td>
<td>$9,700</td>
<td>Sara Reynolds  Marshview Community Organic Farm</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS08-064</td>
<td>Growing the Manning Farmer’s Market</td>
<td>$5,050</td>
<td>Rebecca Rhodes  City of Manning</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS07-059</td>
<td>Chicora Farmers Market</td>
<td>$6,300</td>
<td>Amanda Crump  Metanoia CDC</td>
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EDUCATION ONLY GRANTS

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDS23-054</td>
<td>Gullah/Geechee Heir Property Initiative: Sustaining Heir Property in the Lowcountry Through Sustainable Agriculture</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>Willie Turral Gullah Geechee Initiative Foundation</td>
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<td>EDS23-047</td>
<td>Young Tree Farmers Camp</td>
<td>$46,000</td>
<td>Dr. Jennie Stephens Center for Heirs' Property Preservation Steve Patterson Center for Heirs' Property Preservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDS22-43</td>
<td>Wholesale Market Success For Limited Resource Gullah Farmers</td>
<td>$49,500</td>
<td>Walter Mack Gullah Farmers Cooperative Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total funding from the USDA SARE program to South Carolina $5,520,400

For further information on projects, contact 770-412-4787 or ssare@uga.edu. Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) is funded by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).